

SELLING TIPS

Sunrise yoga with
Explora Journeys



Aquamar Spa,
Oceania Cruises



PICTURES: Rupert Pearce; Stephen Beaudet

How to sell Spa facilities

Offer a world of wellness for your client's next sailing, writes **Rebecca Barnes**

NEED TO KNOW

The facts: From hydro pools to cutting-edge massages, today's sophisticated cruise spas are giving land-based health resorts a run for their money. The 'blue mind theory' suggests that spending time in or near water can provide health benefits – so where better to destress and revitalise than the spa? Iglu Cruise agent Megan Sullivan says: "The investment into thermal spas in recent years means that rather than being an afterthought, the spa experience is now central to the enjoyment of a cruise."

On trend: Explora Journeys has already clocked up various awards for its wellness offering. "Explora Journeys completely owns its spa, allowing us to be agile in our reaction to market needs," says Priti Mehta, head of sales, UK and Ireland. "The hydrotherapy pool, experience shower and Finnish sauna allow us to keep up with trends on land. Our mindfulness programme also offers enrichment with yoga and sound baths."

Norwegian Cruise Line has also upped its spa game with its Prima Class ships. Director of strategic accounts Kirsty Webb believes guests see advanced beauty treatments and luxury spa facilities as part of their lifestyle. "Spa and wellness are an integral aspect of a cruise's offering. Passengers want to disembark feeling better than when they boarded, therefore coming to us for relaxation experiences to rest and reset."

HOW TO SELL

Book early: If your client is looking for some pampering, a visit to the spa is likely to be a highlight. However, they will need to plan ahead to secure their favourite treatments, especially on shorter sailings or those with few or no sea days.

"We encourage customers to be alert to pre-book treatments or go straight to the spa upon boarding to secure their preferred times and experiences," says Sullivan. "Many customers with free onboard credit use it first on spa treatments for luxury pampering, instead of shore excursions or speciality dining."

Tailoring a trip with spa and wellness add-ons can transform a standard booking into a more bespoke experience. Webb adds: "We recommend agents look at adding on spa access for the sailing duration, or day passes."

Upgrade: Accommodation can also be used as an upselling opportunity, according to Simon Leeming, cruise product and commercial manager at Unforgettable Travel Company. "Stateroom upgrades can offer fantastic value, as they often include free access to spa facilities: for example, Oceania Cruises provides complimentary access to the outdoor Spa Terrace featuring a thalassotherapy pool, relaxation room and private sun deck for guests booked in Concierge Level and above – a perk I recently used to upsell a client."